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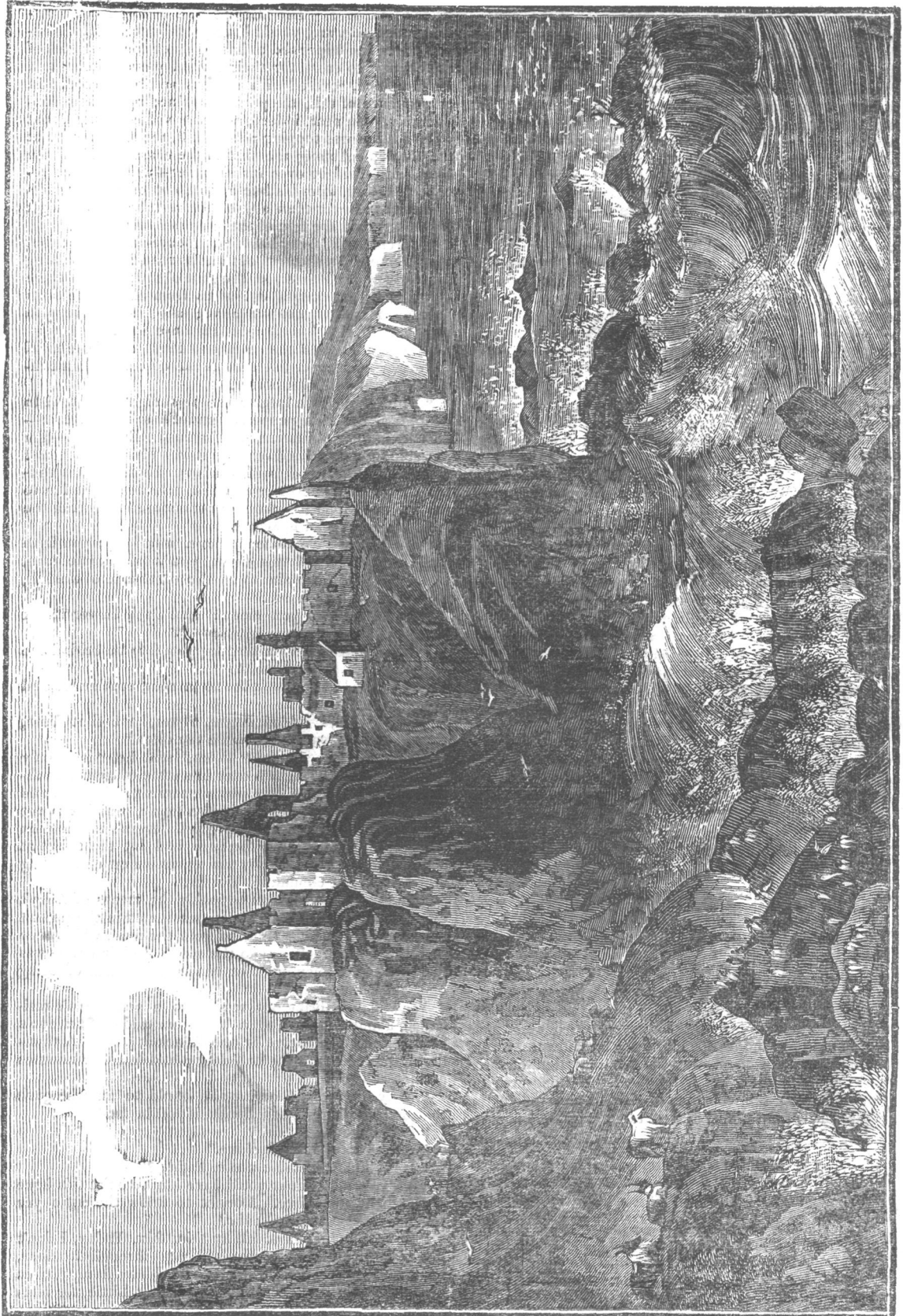
THE
DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY P. DIXON HARDY, M.R.I.A.

Vol. IV.

JUNE 18. 1836.

No. 207.



DUNLUCE CASTLE, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

DUNLUCE CASTLE, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

We have always considered this one of the most interesting ruins to be met with in Ireland. It is situated about five miles from the Giant's Causeway, close to the road-side. It stands on an insulated rock that rises one hundred feet above the level of the sea, and whose perpendicular sides appear as if forming part of the walls—while its base, by the continual action of the waves, has been formed into spacious and rather curious caverns.* It is separated from the mainland by a chasm twenty feet broad, and one hundred feet deep—the only approach to it being by a kind of self-supported arch or wall about eighteen inches wide, below which the foaming wave dashes with considerable violence, even in calm weather.† Across this narrow and dangerous footway the adventurous tourist must pass, if disposed to examine this interesting ruin, which forms one of the most picturesque and commanding objects along the whole line of coast. It is built of columnar basalt, in many instances so placed as to show their polygonal sections. The castle on the rock contained a small court-yard, and several apartments of considerable dimensions. A small vaulted room on the eastern side, called the Banshee's Tower, and said to be still the residence of that aerial being who in days of yore attended the family of the McDonnells, is particularly pointed out by the guide. In the extreme north point, the ruins have all the appearance of overhanging the sea; the walls and battlements beneath having given way, the yawning chasm exposes the dreadful precipice over the cave's mouth, one hundred and fifty feet below—into which, it is said, one stormy day in the year 1639, while the Marchioness of Buckingham resided here, the cook and eight other servants, together with a good part of the kitchen, dinner, &c. were in a moment precipitated. At the land side a very considerable area is covered with buildings, which were at one period surrounded by massive walls, supposed to have been occupied by the soldiers or men-at-arms who were retained for the defence of the castle. It was, from time to time, the scene of several rather important exploits.

By whom it was originally erected is not known; but at a very early period it was possessed by an Irish chieftain of the name of M'Quillan, a member of a once powerful family in the north of Ireland; it afterwards belonged to the family of the McDonnells, Earls of Antrim, who made it their constant residence until about the year 1750.

There is a most delightful prospect on every side from these ruins, around which the waves of the Atlantic at times roll with great violence—the entire shore being studded with huge rocks, over which the sea breaks most furiously.

ALLEY SHERIDAN, OR THE RUNAWAY MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY."
(Concluded from page 400.)

"What's keepin' that girl in the room?" said widow Sheridan. "Alley, will you bring your aunt's holy water to her? My sowl," she added, when no reply was made, "but I'll lay my life she's away wid herself!" and she snatched a candle, with which she surveyed the room, and ascertained, to her utter dismay, that Alley was gone. She found the window open, and the bird flown.

Loud and vehement was the manifestation of grief, noise, and confusion which followed this disclosure; but from none was the clamour of despair and indignation louder than from the aunt. A rapid search commenced

* These caverns are capable of containing a number of boats, and in them are to be seen numerous spars, crystallizations, &c. They communicate with the castle, and are well worthy the notice of the curious traveller.

† On close examination, it appears that there was originally another wall, which ran across the chasm, parallel to the former; and that, by laying boards across these, an easy passage might occasionally be made for the benefit of a garrison.
—*Edm. Ant.*

about the premises, in the course of which Alley and a party of horsemen, for it was clear moonlight, were discovered riding up the hill. In an instant the well-watered guns and pistols were in requisition, and a keen pursuit commenced after the obnoxious party. The widow's friends were, it is true, rather unqualified for a brisk race, many of them being as strongly inclined to retrograde as advance. The attempt of rescuing Alley, however, was made, and would have proved successful if Mullin's party had happened to have a much longer stretch of the country to cross, for their route lay over ditches and rough upland, covered with swamps and brushwood. In consequence of this, the pursuers gained upon them considerably. So near, indeed, was the widow's guard, that when Mullin was topping a small hill, the former were at the bottom. Among the first in the chase was Paul the Shot, with Bridget over his shoulder—and it will be recollected, that, from his late arrival, not only was he less advanced in liquor than any of the rest, but that Bridget herself escaped the fate of the fire-arms on the bed.

"Tarenation!" says Paul, "thundhre-an'-thump! but they'll bate us as they get out on the road before we wing some o' them. Hould, be the shot o' my pouch, if there isn't a bagabone peepin' out at us from behind the ditch as a spy. Here's at you, man alive; take this, whoever you are—(whish, slap)—well done, Paul the Shot."

The object fell off the ditch, and Paul, on whose mind the dread of murder fell with rapid descent, became instantly paralyzed with horror.

"The Laud above forgive me this night—my sowl to happiness, but he's peppered, and I'll swing for him—blessed mother o' heaven, what's this! Evans, go—I'm not able; go, man, and see who it is. Murderer sheery! Oh, Vara, Vara, what will you and Phiddre, that I intinded for the church, say, when you hear that I'm to swing for murder!" And he commenced a howl of the most ludicrous grief imaginable.

"Paul, you have done for one, any how; you have shed innocent blood this night, you unfortunate man, you! Who did you aim at on the other side o' the hill, that you shot poor Vara?"

"Vara! what do you mane?" said Paul, horror-struck and staggering.

"Why, your own Vara that happened to be behind the ditch, and you settled her!"

Paul's howl had now risen to a roar, continuous and incessant.

"Ay, indeed," added Evans, "you have shot Vara, your goat, that was grazin' upon the ditch."

Paul paused suddenly—"What," said he, "is it only the gower?" and he ran over in a state of tremor to ascertain the fact. He then put his hands to his sides, and danced for five minutes to his own music, which was not a whit less grotesque than his grief. Evan's information was correct; he actually for once had hit the object at which he aimed, and his joy was excessive on discovering that he had not committed murder.

This shot, however, was probably the means of Alley's escape; for the pause which it occasioned in the pursuit gave Mullin's friends time to gain the road, which they had no sooner reached than the speed of their horses was increased in a manner that rendered all fear of being overtaken unnecessary.

We will now bring our readers to a gentleman's residence, about a mile and a half from widow Sheridan's house; the hour, twelve or one o'clock at night. A thundering rap comes to the hall-door; and in a few minutes a voice calls out,

"Why thin, might one make bould to ax who gave that delicate little rap? Spake, if you be fat."

"Is that Paddy?"

"Ayeh! all that's left o' me."

"Is the high constable widin, Paddy?"

"Why, 'tisn't widout you'd have him to be at this hour o' the night, man alive. I ought to know the cut o' yer tongue—Is that Frank Neal?"

"So my modher says. Why thin, faix, Paddy, I don't like to be houldin' discourse wid you through the door, more in regard o' the drop o' dhrink I have in my pocket here; and, besides, I want to see Misther Little, for him—